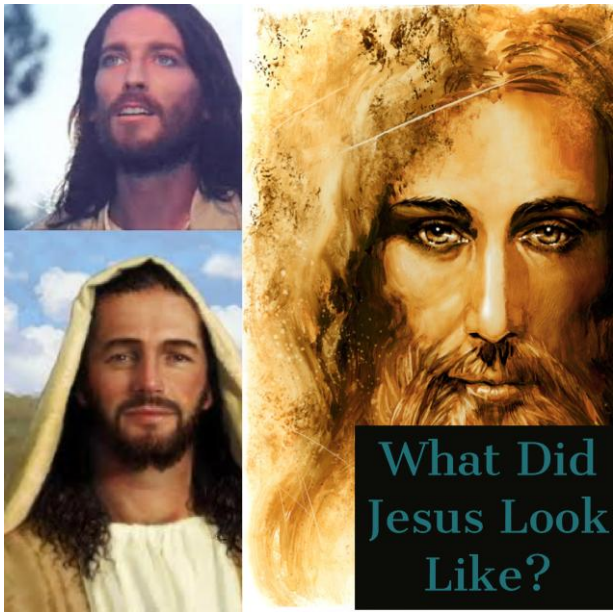
What Did Jesus Look Like?

A Portrait of Christ from Scripture



John Wesley Erbentraut

Copyright © 2014 John Wesley Erbentraut

All rights reserved.

ISBN- 9798339837565

DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to all the souls who are wondering what God looks like, and the loving God who revealed the answer to that question through His unfailing and infinite love to humanity in His Holy Word, the Bible.

CONTENTS

	Acknowledgments	i
1	A Picture Worth a Thousand Words	1
2	If I Have Not Love	Pg 8
3	Love is Patient	Pg 28
4	Love is Kind	Pg 35
5	Love Rejoices With Truth	Pg 43
6	Love Bears All Things	Pg 49
7	Love Believeth All Things	Pg 56
8	Love Always Hopes	Pg 63
9	Love Always Perseveres	Pg 69
10	Love Never Fails	Pg 75
11	Love Remains	Pg 81
12	Love is the Greatest of These	Pg 87
13	Reaching Maturity	Pg 93
14	So, What Did Jesus Look Like?	Pg 105

About the Author Pg

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I acknowledge my wife, Cynthia, for her love and patient help in writing this book.

1 A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

This familiar saying certainly has its place, but we have no images of Christ, at least not in that sense. However, we have a stunning word-picture of His character from Scripture. Though the biblical word-portrait of Jesus provides little information about His physical appearance, it does provide a mountain of information about His character. It is possible that Christ was unimpressive physically, but that line of thought cannot be sustained about His inner person.

We have inherited a scriptural collection of powerful images of Christ. Through the centuries artists and authors have interpreted scripture in their artwork. Some of the images fit and some do not. The person of Christ is so vast it is impossible to capture the complete biblical revelation of Christ in art forms. Only the Bible reveals His person and gives us details concerning His character accurately. The Bible does not present Christ as a statue in a cathedral staring off into space, nor is He still hanging on a Roman cross. Amidst the thousands of artistic representations of Him hanging in museums, there is an amalgamation of everything from an Italian with a dark complexion to a blue-eyed Swede. No wonder people are confused! They are looking in the wrong place and for the wrong thing. The only accurate and true picture of Christ is found only on the pages of the Bible, which is God's Word. In the Bible God is saying, "Hello, this is what I look like." Do not go looking for that verse in scripture because it is not there. No, there

is no actual passage that says that, but figuratively it is true. We have no idea of what He physically looked like because neither Christ nor His apostles felt that was important for us to have. If it were, we would have it in detail. But what He looked like spiritually was and still is important for us to understand and behold. We are to behold him internally in our spiritual man until the day comes when we will see him face to face.

Even though this ultimate reality awaits every person on earth for better or for worse according to the apostle Paul in Romans 14:11, the Bible teaches that we can all be transformed into His image through faith as well. This does not mean that God's plan for us all is to eventually look like a Jewish carpenter from the first century. It means that we are to go through a spiritual transformation that will gradually reveal the character traits of Christ.

Since the character of Christ is an inexhaustible subject, this book examines a few of the major passages from scripture that provide such a vivid picture of Jesus who is God. It is not necessary to discuss them all because the few passages that this book focuses on are ample to get the picture. This should help us get to know Him better. It should also help us develop a relationship with Him daily through faith and God's written Word. It should tell us where we stand in this relationship if we fail Him and ourselves. This is conjoined along with a variety of dynamic features that accompany a living relationship with the risen Christ.

So, let us get busy and take a good look from Scripture at the wondrous word-portrait of Jesus who is God incarnate.

Below is a set of 10 multiple-choice questions that focus on key ideas from the text. Each question is followed by four options. Reflect on the passage when selecting your answer.

1. **What is the primary idea presented in the passage?**
    A. Art and sculptures accurately capture Christ's physical appearance.
    B. The Bible's word-picture of Christ reveals His true character rather than His physical form.
    C. All artistic renditions of Christ are historically accurate.
    D. Christ's physical appearance is more significant than His inner qualities.
2. **According to the text, why do artistic representations of Christ vary so widely?**
    A. Because there is a detailed biblical description that artists misinterpret.
    B. Because artists have intentionally altered His image to match their own cultures and eras.
    C. Because Christ changed His appearance over time.
    D. Because the Bible provides numerous conflicting descriptions of His appearance.
3. **What does the author emphasize as the most important aspect of Christ's portrayal?**
    A. His physical features described in ancient texts.
    B. His inner spiritual character and attributes revealed through Scripture.
    C. The different cultural interpretations of His image.
    D. His historical actions as recorded in Roman records.

4. **What does the term "word-picture" in the context of the passage mean?**
    A. A literal image or portrait of Christ written in the Bible.
    B. A detailed physical description of Christ's appearance.
    C. A metaphorical description of Christ's character found in Scripture.
    D. An artistic rendering meant to inspire followers visually.
5. **How does the passage suggest believers can become more like Christ?**
    A. By studying various artistic interpretations of His image.
    B. By solely imitating the physical traits of a first-century carpenter.
    C. Through a gradual spiritual transformation of character traits as depicted in Scripture.
    D. By focusing on external rituals and ceremonies.
6. **Why is there no explicit biblical verse stating, "This is what I look like"?**
    A. Because Christ's physical appearance was considered irrelevant by Him and His apostles.
    B. Because biblical authors were unaware of how to describe appearances.
    C. Because such descriptions were lost over time.
    D. Because the Bible focuses exclusively on future revelations.
7. **The phrase "Hello, this is what I look like" is used figuratively to indicate that:**
    A. The Bible provides a clear, literal portrait of Christ's physical features.

   B. Christ's physical appearances in art are accurate representations.
   C. The Bible, though not offering a literal description, implicitly communicates Christ's true character.
   D. Artists should ignore biblical accounts when drawing Christ.

8. **According to the text, what should be our source for the most accurate portrayal of Christ?**
   A. The artistic masterpieces displayed in museums around the world.
   B. Personal opinions and cultural trends.
   C. The Bible, as it unveils the details of His inner person.
   D. Written historical documents by non-Christian historians.

9. **What does the text imply about the significance of Christ's physical characteristics?**
   A. They are detailed enough in the Bible to settle any debate.
   B. They are secondary to His character and spiritual impact.
   C. They are the primary basis for Christian artistic representation.
   D. They took on different forms in various cultures according to tradition.

10. **What is the intended outcome of examining the "wondrous word-portrait" of Jesus as suggested in the final paragraph?**
    A. To accumulate a large collection of art pieces for personal admiration.
    B. To compare different artistic depictions and choose the most accurate one.
    C. To deepen one's understanding and relationship with Christ by focusing on His character as revealed in Scripture.

D. To prove that religious art is always inferior to written descriptions.

Answer Key (for self-check or discussion):

1. **B**
2. **B**
3. **B**
4. **C**
5. **C**
6. **A**
7. **C**
8. **C**
9. **B**
10. **C**

These questions are designed to invite reflection on both the literal and figurative language in the text, encouraging deeper insights into the distinction between visual depictions and the transformative word-portrait of Christ described in Scripture.

2 IF I HAVE NOT LOVE

On a television broadcast last evening, a remark was made about Bill Gates. The remark was to the effect that Bill Gates is the most influential man in the 21st century. This author most respectfully and profoundly disagrees. They talked all about the new water-less high-tech toilets that he is bringing to poverty-stricken areas of the world, where disease runs rampant because of unsanitary conditions. They also talked about his wonderful programs to bring vaccines to the neediest people of the world as well. Our hats are off to Bill Gates; however he is a multi-billionaire, and he most certainly cannot take his money with him at death. He should be helping the unfortunate and suffering in the world with all that money. However, he could do all those ten times over, and it would not come close to the accomplishments of Christ for humanity in every century, not just the 21st.

As an introduction to the portrait of Christ in Scripture, one should look at the biblical description of love. Let us look at what Paul the apostle said about love. "And if I bestow all my goods to feed *the poor*, and if I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profiteth me nothing." (RV, 1 Corinthians 13:3) Paul's remark in his letter to the Corinthian church is much more than an exhortation to seek and do loving acts toward others. Though the Bible does teach emphatically to love our neighbor as ourselves, including loving acts of kindness, it also goes much deeper. It teaches about possessing love. In this case it speaks about possessing the person of love in our lives by faith in Jesus Christ. "Whoever does not love does not know God, because

God is love." (NIV, 1 John 4:8) Therefore, the first element to the portrait of Christ in scripture begins to emerge on the canvas for our inner eyes to see. He is love. He is divine love personified. The love that the Bible talks about is more than kind and unselfish acts toward others. Though we should not stop doing these things, they are not the ultimate picture of love from the Bible. "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." (NIV, Galatians 6:9)

The Bible culminates the picture of God's love in Christ through His redemptive work on the cross of Calvary. No billionaire will ever hang on a cross and reconcile the sinful world to God, as Christ did. "God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation." (NIV, 2 Corinthians 5:19) Nor will the world's wealthy ever come again to earth on white horses accompanied by all the holy angels of heaven for the sole purpose of destroying the devil and to put an end to sin and evil. "Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all of them of all the ungodly acts they have committed in their ungodliness, and of all the defiant words ungodly sinners have spoken against him." (NIV, Jude 1:14) Only Jesus qualifies for that.

Though there have been people to lay claim to love in many respects, only Jesus is the personification of God's love. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but

have eternal life." (NIV, John 3:16) It is possible for people to alleviate the suffering of others, but it is not possible for anyone except Christ to grant eternal life. It does not take long while reading the New Testament accounts of Christ's life and ministry to see the uniqueness of the theanthropic person. The Bible teaches that He is the exact representation of the invisible God. "The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven." (NIV, Hebrews 1:3) In other words, if you want to know what God looks like, read the Bible through faith, and there He is to see. As we read the Gospel accounts, we will see page after page of pure love. It is a love like no other.

However, the human mind is warped by the ideologies and philosophies of this sinful world. Humanity, in his unregenerate state, is a soulish prisoner of depravity. Even in humanity's highest and most lofty aspirations, human thought is twisted by sin. This convoluted state of unredeemed humanity has twisted the inner perception of people. This state is to the point of either completely rejecting, or in many cases, tailoring what the Bible presents as the picture of love. There is no point in going into the Greek exegesis of the biblical terms because most readers are not really interested in that anyway. It should suffice to simply notice the dramatic difference between the two. If you are, turn to a good lexicon. It does not take long while reading the Scripture to notice that there is a stark contrast between how the world is presently defining love and how the Bible defines love.

American society, which is pluralistic politically, has somehow thought that the definition of love should be pluralistic as well. Simply put, people in our society believe that all forms of love are equal and deserve the same degree of respect. This is without respect for the results and consequences of the presumed forms of love. Under this premise prostitution, homosexuality and traditional marriage are on equal ground if people are not suffering injury by these forms of love. In other words, if it is not hurting people, it is fine. This is hogwash, and the Bible does not endorse that thinking. This way of thinking has evolved from sitcoms and talk-show hosts into a progressive pattern of acceptance of what God clearly calls sin in His Word. It is a form of universal inclusivity, and it does not fit the picture of God's exclusively holy character or the biblical picture of love. In other words, God hates sin and is completely outraged by it. However, He offers unconditional (agape) love to the sinner because His wrath concerning sin is thoroughly satisfied at the cross of Christ. This does not mean that God loves the sinner and permits the sinner to continue as usual. It means that God has an offer of forgiveness and transformation that stems from the awful penalty that Christ bore on the cross for the sin of the entire world.

Therefore, the trite Bible quotations on Christmas cards about peace on earth and goodwill toward men are only partially true. Most of the world still lives beneath the awful wrath of God because much of the world still rejects God's offer of His Son, the offer of His love, which must be received through personal faith in Christ. No one receives salvation because Christ died on the cross for the sin of the world. People are saved when they put personal faith in

Christ for salvation. At that point, the full weight of His provision of the legal payment for sin goes into effect for that individual.

Our present social milieu accepts a wide range of practices, such as homosexuality, Internet porn, as normal lifestyles, and genuine expressions of love. This is often executed under the unbiblical premise that God loves everybody, and everything about everybody. Emphatically, God has commended His love to the world without discrimination toward race, gender, or social background or even degrees of sin. Some of the most influential figures in God's biblical revelation even committed murder, such as Moses, Paul, and David. God has concluded that all human beings are sinful by birth, divine decree and by practice. Christ even prayed for the forgiveness of those who drove nails through His hands and feet.

Though He has commended His love toward all humanity, He does not love everything about everybody. All such practices are perverted by sinful lust and find their origins in the fallen state of sinful humanity, which is fueled by a self-centered character (sin nature) that cannot be stopped without God's intervention of redeeming love. The Adamic or sinful nature of man is not acceptable to God, and that is why He has a plan to transform it. Though these sinful practices and beliefs are gaining ground like a California wildfire in the Santa Ana wind, they find no acceptance in God's Word before His fiery eyes of judgment. If one were to reject these findings, the author would recommend a complete reading of the book of Revelation. Humans truly need salvation. "In an analogous way, Sodom and Gomorrah

and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire." (NIV, Jude 1:7)

Let us gather our thoughts for a moment and clarify what all of this means. On the one side of the story God has reconciled the world to himself. Therefore, God does not hate homosexuals or any other sinner. He does not endorse bigotry of any kind. If so, he would not have prayed for forgiveness for the people who nailed Him to a cross. The cross of Christ is irrefutably the greatest gift of love ever. This offer stands in Christ as an exclusive offer because salvation is in Christ alone through faith. "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." (NIV, Act 4:12) People receive this exclusive offer is through faith alone in Christ alone and nothing else. On the other side of the story the offer is all inclusive because it is to the entire world provisionally in Christ's name. Other views that limit the scope of Christ's redeeming work militate against the full revelation of God's Word. Once the free gift of salvation is received through faith the believer then can experience and live in the power of God's love from within by the power and transforming work of the Holy Spirit. Every born-again child of God is equipped to live a godly life through the divine nature. "His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness." (NIV, 2 Peter 1:3) Only then can a human being accurately perceive and grow in the love of God.

Even though the gift is free, and humans can offer no works at all to God for it, people globally remain distant from God's true revelation of love as revealed in His Word. People continue with fear of judgment in their hearts and minds. This is a result of sin that has separated humanity from God. It is an inner prison of shame, fear and guilt in their minds and hearts. Millions more have gotten to the point of rejecting their conscience and have become dulled to conviction and reject it altogether. To complicate matters more, the terrible effect of sin, which has distorted the human mind and heart, is also compounded and aggravated by the active work of the deceiver in the world today. This spiritual wreckage has spiraled into a downward pull, which is presently drowning our society, not excluding much of the church, with twisted and lewd sex acts published on the internet and in multi-forms of entertainment. People do not realize that their PC is a potential electronic boa-constrictor. It can squeeze the life right out of you by just the click of a few buttons. Remember, David did not plan to stay that long with Bathsheba.

However, there is no sense in picking on the internet or the film industry, because sin was published in the heart of humanity before it ever got to the internet or the big screen. The murder of the human soul is as old as the Garden of Eden. This incredible evil scheme attempts to thwart the plan of God, by keeping people blinded to the glorious love of God revealed through the preaching of the Finished Work of salvation as set forth in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel

that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." (NIV, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4) Yet people still have a tremendous need for love. The human heart is a reservoir either filled with the wrong definition of love or God's definition of love who is Christ.

People are afraid to come to God because they fear judgment of all the sin that they have committed. People feel this way because the Holy Spirit is convicting the world of sin, but He is also pointing people to Christ who is perfect love. This process is not without confrontation. God confronts us with the truth about our sinfulness, and about His righteousness. God is perfectly righteous, and simultaneously perfect in love. Christ is the personification of both. We cannot accept the one without the other, at least not without tearing half the pages out of God's Word. That is exactly what liberal theology has done. It has smoothed over the entire issue of the confrontational properties of truth. Thus, it has presented another Jesus. He is the Jesus on Christmas cards and in most churches, but He is not the Jesus in Scripture.

Jesus came to cast out the demon (state of mind) of fear with perfect love, but not without the confrontation of truth. "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love." (NIV, 1 John 4:18) We must face the truth about Him as the only legitimate avenue to God; we must also face the truth about ourselves as well. Prostitutes and immoral persons do not need Christ any more than the religiously devout because they do not have Christ

through personal faith. This is a truth from Scripture that offends people. "Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (NIV, John 14:6) Christ did not come to punish sinners; he came to set them free from the power of sin and death. His second advent will be a different story; He will come again to judge all who have rejected His offer of forgiveness. That is truly worthy of fear.

The Gospels are a wondrous fireworks display of God's love. They reveal the fabulous nature of the grace and love of God. They explode on the scene with angelic announcements and prophetic fulfillment. The cannon blasts of grace healed the sick, raised the dead and forgave sinners. He put dead religion in its place and revealed a new and vital way to God full of life and fruit. It all concludes with the drama of dramas, Christ on a cross, which terrible event unfurled the blossom of eternal life from an empty tomb. Let us approach the canvas of God's Word in the Gospels and behold the picture of His Son, Jesus Christ. For these reasons, the author has selected a few verses from scripture that certainly reveal God's love. They are not the only or exclusive examples from the Bible on the subject, but they certainly enhance our vision as to the word-picture of Christ from scripture. This book obtains a composite word-picture of Christ through focusing on the words of a person who came face to face with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus. These are the words of a once-upon-a-time hardcore legalist, who was now transformed by the person of love who is Christ Jesus. Truly, these words reflect the apostle's image of the Savior in Scripture that he came to know through grace and unconditional love.

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child; I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. (NIV, 1 Corinthians 13:4 -13)

The apostle defines love in two basic ways, with positive and negative characteristics. The positive are listed below.

1 Love is patient

2 Love is kind

3 rejoices with the truth

4 beareth all things

5 believeth all things

6 always hopes

7 always perseveres

8 Love never fails

9 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love

10 But the greatest of these is love

These ten positive attributes of God's love are punctuated with eight negatives, or things that God's love is not.

1 It does not envy.

2 It does not boast.

3 It is not proud.

4 It does not dishonor others.

5 It is not self-seeking.

6 It is not easily angered.

7 It keeps no record of wrongs.

8 Love does not delight in evil.

These positive and negative attributes of God's love are interrupted with a broad statement of reaching spiritual maturity and completion from verses 8-12. The passage concludes with the stunning verse that describes the three prize gems of the Christian Walk. They are love, faith, and hope. Clearly the apostle states that love is the greatest of these three. If we can genuinely love as Christ loved us, we would shine His light in a world that walks in darkness. It is also clear that although every believer in Christ possesses the gem of His love, not all show it. This gem is the wealth that our neighbor needs. It is the strength that we need because it serves as a constant reminder during physical and spiritual hardships in this world that we are not really what our station in this world claims. We are the gem that shines in His eye from His throne in heaven. We are the precious possession bought with such a great price of His shed blood on the cross.

Paul said in the book of Ephesians that we, “may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.” (NIV, Ephesians 3:18)

It is not the purpose of this book to examine every feature of God’s love. Truly such a task would take more than one lifetime. A long-drawn-out book was not the objective. Each short chapter is set forth in a devotional format with an expository slant. Though each chapter can be read in just a few minutes, the true scope of this short book is to reach upward to the high calling in Christ. Therefore, it is the author’s hope that each chapter would lead the reader into their own biblical research and devotion. One could spend hours or even days meditating on the subject material as presented. It is truly this author’s hope that if we could peer into the depths of His loving eyes the experience would soften our hearts, and our present difficulties would melt beneath their blaze of glory. We would see the meaning of the biblical definition of love. It is a face. It is His face full of love forever toward us. We can learn to be vessels of His love if we learn to grasp what Christ looks like from Scripture. The picture that the Bible presents is love, pure divine love.

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz designed for "Chapter 2: If I Have Not Love." Although the chapter draws

its inspiration from the well-known biblical teaching (often found in 1 Corinthians 13) about the indispensable nature of love, these questions can be adapted to the particular discussion and themes presented in this chapter. Each question is followed by four answer options.

1. **What is the central message of the chapter "If I Have Not Love"?**

    A. That spiritual gifts and talents are more important than personal emotion.

    B. That without love, any gift or action—even if impressive—is ultimately empty.

    C. That intellectual accomplishments outweigh any emotional offering.

    D. That external rituals are the primary evidence of faith.

2. **According to the chapter, what effect do actions without love have?**

    A. They become as effective as a well–orchestrated symphony.

    B. They fade into insignificance like empty noise or clanging cymbals.

    C. They gain value from the sheer effort behind them.

D. They serve as a basis for further spiritual rewards.

3. **In the context of the chapter, which of the following best describes the nature of love?**

   A. A temporary emotion that comes and goes.

   B. An enduring foundation that transcends all spiritual gifts.

   C. A tool used only to encourage good behavior externally.

   D. A quality that is secondary to faith and knowledge.

4. **Which of these is NOT highlighted as a characteristic of true love in the chapter?**

   A. Patience

   B. Kindness

   C. Boastfulness

   D. Endurance

5. **What comparison is made to illustrate the futility of actions without love?**

   A. Such actions are compared to a candle that burns without light.

   B. They are likened to a lifeless statue in an empty hall.

C. They are compared to the sound of a clanging cymbal or resounding brass.

D. They are described as a river without water.

6. **How does the chapter suggest believers should view their spiritual gifts or actions?**

   A. As achievements to be celebrated publicly regardless of their source.

   B. As valuable only if they are accompanied by genuine love.

   C. As superior to inner spiritual development.

   D. As independent markers of personal virtue.

7. **Which statement best summarizes the relationship between love and other virtues (like faith and hope) as described in the chapter?**

   A. Faith and hope are more stable than love.

   B. Love is the ultimate virtue that outlasts both faith and hope.

   C. Love, faith, and hope are equally fleeting.

   D. Love depends solely on the support of faith and hope.

8. **What does the chapter imply about the motivation behind our actions?**

   A. That the pursuit of recognition should drive

all our deeds.

B. That actions performed for self-glory are the most rewarding.

C. That our actions should be firmly rooted in love for others.

D. That discipline and ritual are more critical than inner feelings.

9. **How does the chapter challenge its readers in light of their personal behavior?**

A. By urging them to collect as many spiritual accomplishments as possible.

B. By asking them to ignore the call of love and focus on tradition.

C. By inviting them to evaluate whether their words and deeds flow naturally from true love.

D. By recommending that they prioritize intellectual pursuits over emotional growth.

10. **Ultimately, what transformation does the chapter encourage in the life of a believer?**

A. A transformation that emulates external behaviors found in religious ceremonies.

B. An inward change where one’s character is gradually conformed to the nature of true

love.

C. A focus on accumulating spiritual gifts without regard for personal relationships.

D. A shift toward a more calculated, transactional approach to faith.

Answer Key

1. **B**
2. **B**
3. **B**
4. **C**
5. **C**
6. **B**
7. **B**
8. **C**
9. **C**
10. **B**

These questions invite deep reflection on the necessity of authentic love as the foundation of all spiritual expression. They challenge readers to consider whether their actions, no

matter how outwardly impressive, carry the inner warmth and commitment that the chapter identifies as essential.

3 LOVE IS PATIENT

"The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep." (NIV, John 21:17)

What a fabulous picture of patience, which is the first element of the composite word-portrait of Christ as described by Paul the apostle. Peter was the one who said that he would go all the way with Christ to the cross. He did not get very far, did he? One might say that he fell flat on his face. He became a Christ denier and a liar. Yet Christ did not lose patience with Peter. His entire focus was on a single question. Do you love me? What a picture of patience and love intertwined. The question was not, "Why did you deny me?" "Why did you let me down when I needed you the most?" "Why are you such a chickenhearted coward?" "Why are you a complete spiritual failure?" "Why are you here Peter, when you should be hiding your face from me?" "You should have known better because you are my disciple, and even in my inner circle of disciples!" "You had knowledge of my power on the Mount of Transfiguration, yet you failed me!" On a normal human relationship basis any of the above questions and accusations would fit the situation. Peter deserved slamming to the mat.

However, Jesus does not maintain a normal human

relationship with people. He is not your boss at your place of employment. He is not your professor at college. He is not even like your earthly parents who have the same sinful shortcomings that you do. There was no surprise in Jesus' voice. There was no blame. There was no resentment. There was just patient love. To paraphrase Peter's response, "Oh Lord, what is the use in playing games? You know everything about me!" How long did Jesus wait to hear that come from Peter's heart? How long does He wait for us to confess that from our hearts?

Christ waits patiently for us to get over our performance based Christian Walk. He waits until we see that we are spiritual failures with no strength outside of Him. All other presentations of Christ in this regard are misrepresentations. He is not waiting around the corner until next Sunday to let us know how much we have failed Him. That type of picture just is not in the Scripture. He just wants us to realize that our relationship with Him is based on His love toward us, and the proper response to His love is our love in terms of serving Him through faith. It is not a performance! If it were, we would all fail as miserably as Peter.

The question is, "Do you love me?" That is the focus! If we do, we need to be about the business of spreading the good news of Jesus Christ with a lost and dying world. God is not pointing a finger of condemnation in our face. He is just patiently waiting in love for us to realize that He is the only way to conquer our fears and other weaknesses. Therefore, the first aspect of the word-portrait of Christ to

behold is patient love. Take a deep look into the eyes of Christ along with Peter. The question is repeated over and over. Do you love me? The response is, “Of course I do! Lord, you know everything about me!”

There are no surprises because God is not startled! He is not blaming! He is waiting for the day that we stop playing games. He is waiting because He already knows that we cannot do this without Him. No one can! Oh, what patience! Oh, what love! “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.” (NIV**,** 2 Peter 3:9)

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz based on the themes and insights presented in **Chapter 3: LOVE IS PATIENT**. Each question is followed by four options:

1. **What is the primary emphasis of the phrase "Love is Patient" as discussed in the chapter?**
    A. Acting quickly in all circumstances
    B. Waiting gracefully and enduring hardships for the sake of love
    C. Remaining silent during disputes
    D. Avoiding conflict at all costs

2. **How does the chapter illustrate the role of patience in love?**
    A. By suggesting that waiting without action is always best
    B. By emphasizing that endurance in the face of challenges nurtures deeper relationships
    C. By promoting a hands-off approach to conflict resolution
    D. By prioritizing personal needs before those of others
3. **Which of the following best describes a quality of love that is patient, according to the chapter?**
    A. It delays addressing issues until they resolve themselves
    B. It is slow to anger, allowing for growth and understanding even in difficult times
    C. It requires immediate change from the other person
    D. It avoids any confrontation or acknowledgement of problems
4. **What effect does practicing patient love have on relationships, as highlighted in the chapter?**
    A. It creates distance by encouraging inaction
    B. It deepens connections and fosters mutual understanding over time
    C. It causes uncertainty because issues are never directly addressed
    D. It diminishes passion in favor of routine
5. **In contrast to patient love, how is impatience portrayed in the chapter?**
    A. Impatience is shown as a catalyst for swift resolution, enhancing relationships

B. Impatience often leads to conflict, misunderstanding, and hurt feelings
C. Impatience is rare and has little impact on daily interactions
D. Impatience is described as a neutral trait with no major consequences

6. **Which action exemplifies the practice of patient love as outlined in the chapter?**
   A. Withholding forgiveness until the wrong is immediately corrected
   B. Exercising self-control and understanding, even when change comes slowly
   C. Demanding instant improvement from others
   D. Ignoring personal growth in favor of maintaining the status quo
7. **How does the chapter link patience with forgiveness?**
   A. It claims that true patience means never revisiting old hurts
   B. It explains that patient love naturally involves forgiving and extending grace repeatedly
   C. It suggests that forgiveness is only warranted if accompanied by an apology
   D. It states that forgiveness and patience are unrelated virtues
8. **Which scenario best reflects the concept of patient love discussed in the chapter?**
   A. Ceasing all communication until problems vanish
   B. Consistently offering support and understanding despite ongoing challenges

C. Exiting a relationship at the first sign of trouble
D. Repeating the same advice without considering the other person's growth

9. **Why might the principle "Love is Patient" be particularly challenging for modern society, according to the chapter?**
   A. Because modern society universally values extended waiting periods
   B. Because a fast-paced culture often prioritizes instant results over gradual growth
   C. Because it requires constant physical demonstrations of affection
   D. Because it mandates total silence in times of conflict
10. **Ultimately, what transformation is said to occur when patient love is applied in daily life?**
   A. Relationships become more superficial and less emotionally connected
   B. Individuals grow personally and spiritually, leading to deeper, more resilient relationships
   C. Conflict becomes entirely eliminated from interactions
   D. Power struggles in relationships are intensified

Answer Key

1. **B**
2. **B**

3. **B**
4. **B**
5. **B**
6. **B**
7. **B**
8. **B**
9. **B**
10. **B**

These questions are designed to help readers reflect on how the quality of patience enriches love, fosters forgiveness, and transforms relationships by encouraging both personal and mutual growth.

4 LOVE IS KIND

"Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." Again, he stooped down and wrote on the ground. At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin." (NIV, John 8:1-11)

How many churches today would admit this woman into fellowship? Not many, is the answer, even though Christ had set this woman free from sin. Not a single stone was thrown in her direction. The full force of the Mosaic Law was present. This woman was caught red-handed in the sin of adultery. She had broken the seventh commandment. Jesus

did not argue this point. Yet Jesus brought the trial on a broader discussion. In the face of the accuser's trick questions, Jesus responded with a new commandment. "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone!" Why wasn't the woman's specific sin the focus? It was not because Jesus wants men to see the broader issue of sin. Namely, that we are all sinners equally deserving of stoning under the law.

Jesus had a much greater plan. Love is kind. There is no person in the true church of Jesus Christ that has not heard the kind words from His lips, "Go and sin no more!" This does not mean that God is giving us a second chance, or even 490 chances. Jesus was standing between the condemnation of the Law and the woman that deserved stoning to death. The problem was that they all deserved stoning as well. The only person that did not was Jesus, because he was the only one without sin. His commandment to go and sin no more could not possibly mean that Christ was commanding the woman to not sin anymore. If that were true, He was committing her to a path of permanent failure and condemnation and doomed to return to the same situation of potentially stoning to death in the next five minutes. Love was much kinder than that.

Without so much as a raised hand against her, Christ set her free from sin permanently. His commandment to go and sin no more was a proclamation of loving-kindness. To paraphrase Christ's statement, "Go now, you are free from sins power and condemnation forever!" If it were not, the

trial of the woman caught in adultery would have ended with, “Go now, “I don’t want to see you here again in this situation as a repeat offender.” That is just the problem, we are all repeat offenders. Our only hope is to be set free permanently!

Stop a moment and think this through. We have all repeated the same sins thousands of times. That is the truth! Every time we did, we deserved the same penalty as the woman caught in adultery, which is death by stoning. “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” (NIV, John 8:36) This means free completely and forever of all sin and its penalty which is death.

The church would prosper spiritually in a multitude of ways if it exercised such kindness toward sinners. Yet most churches feel that people need to clean up their act first or place them on some sort of timetable to prove their sincerity concerning their profession of faith. Let us see the eyes of kindness in the picture of our Savior. The woman was trapped in sin and so were her accusers. Yet only she walked free from sin in that situation. Just stop and consider the kindness that God showed each one of us when we first were saved. Just consider how great His kindness continues to grow as we walk through our years on earth in His grace and loving-kindness. For the LORD is good; His loving-kindness is everlasting and His faithfulness to all generations. (NASB, Psalm 100:5)

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz based on the themes and insights from **Chapter 4: LOVE IS KIND**. Each question is designed to help readers reflect on how kindness—as an essential expression of love—is defined, demonstrated, and its impact on relationships and communities.

1. **What is the meaning of the phrase "Love is Kind" as described in this chapter?**
    A. Love is expressed only through grand gestures.
    B. Love demonstrates compassion, empathy, and a selfless desire to uplift others.
    B. Love is limited to courteous words in public.
    C. Love involves strict obligations rather than genuine care.
2. **According to the chapter, how is kindness typically expressed in daily life?**
    A. Through small, thoughtful acts of care and understanding.
    B. By always avoiding conflict, even when issues need addressing.
    C. By maintaining a polite façade without deeper emotional engagement.
    D. Through lavish gifts and public acclaim alone.

3. **What distinguishes kind love from mere politeness, based on the chapter's discussion?**
   A. Kind love involves deep empathy and a genuine concern for others' well-being.
   B. Kind love is simply about saying the right words at the right time.
   C. Kind love is a temporary social convention with little lasting impact.
   D. Kind love relies more on duty than on heartfelt compassion.
4. **In the context of a relationship, what function does kindness serve according to the chapter?**
   A. It minimizes open communication to avoid hurt feelings.
   B. It acts as a bridge to heal differences and foster understanding.
   B. It is only beneficial when both parties show equal amounts of kindness.
   C. It replaces the need for other virtues like patience or forgiveness.
5. **Which of the following is an example of kind love as described in the chapter?**
   A. Ignoring a friend's mistake to avoid conflict altogether.
   B. Offering forgiveness and understanding after a misunderstanding occurs.
   B. Withholding support until the other person earns it.
   C. Celebrating achievements while overlooking areas needing growth.
6. **What long-term impact does practicing kind love have, according to the chapter?**

A. It leads to dependency on the giver's constant attention.
B. It strengthens bonds and builds a resilient, supportive community.
B. It causes individuals to lose their personal identity in the process.
C. It offers only temporary comfort without lasting change.

7. **How does the chapter relate kindness to the process of forgiveness?**
   A. Kindness and forgiveness are entirely separate virtues.
   B. Kindness nurtures forgiveness by creating an environment of empathy and healing.
   B. Kindness is only effective if forgiveness is already granted.
   C. Kindness requires hard-set boundaries that make forgiveness difficult.
8. **What challenge does modern society face in practicing kind love, according to the chapter?**
   A. A fast-paced culture often prioritizes instant results over the gradual build-up of kind, thoughtful actions.
   B. There is an inherent lack of capacity for kindness in today's social interactions.
   C. Modern society values individual achievements far more than communal support.
   D. Overemphasis on technological communication diminishes personal warmth.
9. **How is kindness portrayed as having the power to transform difficult circumstances?**

A. By forcing immediate reconciliation through assertiveness.
B. By enabling compassionate responses that mend and restore fractured relationships.
B. By simply ignoring conflicts until they subside naturally.
C. By prioritizing personal comfort over challenging conversations.

10. **Ultimately, what is the transformative goal of emphasizing "Love is Kind" in this chapter?**
    A. To encourage grand, show-off acts of charity that attract admiration.
    B. To cultivate humble, compassionate interactions that mirror divine love and transform individuals and communities.
    B. To establish a system where kindness is measured only by visible achievements.
    C. To create a temporary peace that fails to address deeper relational needs.

Answer Key

1. **B**
2. **A**
3. **A**
4. **B**
5. **B**
6. **B**
7. **B**
8. **A**

9. **B**
10. **B**

These questions are crafted to engage readers in reflecting on the core message of the chapter, that authentic kindness, as an integral part of love, is not merely a social nicety but a transformative force in our relationships and communities

5 LOVE REJOICES WITH TRUTH

"Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." (NIV, John 3:3)

There is no power in the universe greater than truth. Love rejoices with truth and is set in contrast to the first part of the verse, which states that love does not rejoice in unrighteousness. The Bible likens truth to light and lies to darkness. "This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all." (NIV, 1 John 1:5)

The full experience of love for the believer while on earth is always connected to truth. The believer is to embrace truth from the Bible and reject the world's philosophies. Though the world's great philosophers offer some things that can also be found in the Bible, Christ is superior to all the world's philosophies. The world's philosophies are not equal to God's revealed truth in the Bible. If the believer is walking in the power of Christ's love, they are also walking in the power of Christ's truth. The two are inseparable. Though there is competition in the world for center stage concerning truth, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (NIV, John 1:5)

Therefore, if the believer is truly walking in God's power the believer will also be walking in light, which is synonymous with truth. "But if we walk in the light, as he is

in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin." (NIV, 1 John 1:7) Unfortunately, many believers are not walking in the truth. They have embraced false teaching or doctrine. This is tragic! It robs or defrauds the believer of a great prize, which can only be experienced as the truth. "Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." (NIV, Colossians 2:8) The portrait of Christ in scripture is perfect truth. His truth never wavers at all. Believers have genuine reason to rejoice in God's love. Rejoice in the Lord alway: again I will say, Rejoice. (NIV, Philippians 4:4)

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz based on the themes and insights from **Chapter 5: LOVE REJOICES WITH TRUTH**. Each question invites readers to reflect on how the profound connection between love and truth transforms relationships, personal integrity, and community life.

1. **What is the primary meaning of the phrase "Love rejoices with truth" as presented in this chapter?**
    A. Love only tolerates truth and avoids confrontation.
    B. Love finds joy and fulfillment when grounded in honesty and transparency.

B. Love prefers sweet lies over harsh realities.
C. Love remains indifferent as long as peace is maintained.

2. **According to the chapter, why is truth considered a critical component of genuine love?**
   A. Because truth is an abstract ideal with little practical impact.
   B. Because truth builds trust, fosters growth, and deepens the intimacy of relationships.
   B. Because truth creates distance by exposing vulnerabilities.
   C. Because truth is often easier to ignore than face.
3. **How does the chapter suggest that rejoicing with truth manifests in personal relationships?**
   A. By avoiding difficult conversations to keep harmony at all costs.
   B. By welcoming honest communication—even when it involves constructive criticism—in order to nurture mutual development.
   B. By emphasizing personal opinions over shared realities.
   C. By prioritizing superficial compliments rather than addressing issues.
4. **What role does truth play in the process of transformation, according to the chapter?**
   A. Truth is a static fact that remains unchanged by our experiences.
   B. Embracing truth spurs personal growth and invites a continual renewal of character within loving relationships.
   B. Truth is a barrier that prevents change from taking place.

C. Truth is less influential than positive affirmations in developing relationships.

5. **Which scenario best illustrates the concept that "Love rejoices with truth"?**
    A. A person gently sharing an honest observation with a friend, even if it's not easy to say, because they care about their well-being.
    B. Avoiding a disagreeable truth to preserve a temporary appearance of peace.
    C. Masking one's true feelings to avoid hurting someone's pride.
    D. Allowing miscommunications to fester in order to prevent conflict.
6. **In the context of community and spiritual life, how is truth celebrated as an act of love?**
    A. By withholding difficult truths to maintain superficial harmony.
    B. By collectively seeking and affirming what is real, fostering an environment where accountability and unity prevail.
    B. By enforcing rigid doctrines that ignore personal experiences.
    C. By celebrating diversity while ignoring common values.
7. **How does the chapter differentiate between honesty and rejoicing with truth?**
    A. Honesty is merely stating facts, whereas rejoicing with truth involves celebrating the integrity that those facts bring to our lives.
    B. There is no difference; both are identical in practice and meaning.

C. Honesty focuses on practicality, while rejoicing with truth is only about idealistic expressions of love.
D. Rejoicing with truth is an emotional reaction, whereas honesty is a detached observation.

8. **What consequence is described in the chapter as resulting from neglecting truth in relationships?**
   A. An increased number of superficial compliments.
   B. A gradual erosion of trust, leading to misunderstandings and weakened bonds.
   B. An overemphasis on conflict that eventually strengthens the relationship.
   C. A temporary period of confusion followed by immediate resolution.
9. **Why might "rejoicing with truth" be considered a challenging yet encouraging practice in modern society?**
   A. Because modern society values instant gratification over deep, reflective communication.
   B. Because truth is often hidden behind layers of convenient falsehoods.
   C. Because while it demands courage and vulnerability, embracing truth ultimately enriches our lives and relationships.
   C. Because it forces us to adopt a rigid and uncompromising position at all times.
10. **Ultimately, what transformation does the chapter suggest can occur when love aligns with truth?**
    A. Relationships become more formal and structured, emphasizing rules over feelings.
    B. Individuals and communities experience

a renewal of character that is marked by genuine connection, resilience, and mutual growth.

B. Personal growth is stunted by unyielding honesty without compassion.
C. Superficial bonds are replaced by detached interactions that avoid emotional depth.

Answer Key

1. **B**
2. **B**
3. **B**
4. **B**
5. **A**
6. **B**
7. **A**
8. **B**
9. **C**
10. **B**

These questions are designed to engage readers in exploring how the integration of truth with love not only calls for honest communication but also celebrates authenticity as the foundation for transformative relationships.

6 LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS

"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as one beside himself) I more; in labours more abundantly, in prisons more abundantly, in stripes above measure, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep; *in* journeyings often, in perils of rivers, in perils of robbers, in perils from my countrymen, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in labour and travail, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, there is that which presseth upon me daily, anxiety for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is made to stumble, and I burn not?" (RV, 2 Corinthians 11:23-29)

The truth is walking by faith in God's service is risky because loving as Christ loves is also risky. It may very well be injurious to us. The above passage teaches this as fact. Yet, neither Paul nor we are alone in this battle. Paul was able to see the bigger picture. He was able to get over his injuries and losses to see something much greater at work in his life. "For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

(RV, 2 Corinthians 4:17 -18)

Therefore, the question remains. Who was doing the bearing, Paul, or Christ? To bring it on a personal level, we could ask who is doing our bearing, us, or Christ? There is no doubt that Paul was feeling real pain and loss. We do too! Yet, he found strength to bear his losses through Christ's inner presence. We can too!

Most of us will never be required to bear the kind of punishment that Paul did. Yet, that does not diminish the importance of our losses and the pain we may suffer in many ways for our walk in Christ through faith. Like Paul, we need to bring this on the plane of the bigger picture. We are engaged in a battle bigger than the sum of all of us combined. Only Christ can truly hold us up in our times of pain and loss. The great apostle endured inhumane suffering that is almost unimaginable. A beating with rods usually proceeds through the loss of all natural body functions and ends in death. Before death comes to alleviate the suffering, most people lose complete control of bladder and bowel functions. How horrible, yet true!

This is a time to stop and consider how great a price was paid for our faith. The pinnacle of the price of suffering is pictured at Calvary's cross. It extends in both directions past and future from there. Do we take our spiritual freedom lightly? Do we not consider how great a price was paid? Do we think that our minuscule troubles are so great and not worth going through? Do we think that the loss of a job or

money is so great? They are not so great, yet they are important!

Read these passages carefully. Our troubles are not so great. Nonetheless, they are significant to God. They are important to Him. We have no real idea how much of our troubles and burdens God is really carrying. The burden is ultimately on Him. He bears our failures and complaints. The true picture of Christ is His love truly bears it all. “Cast all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.” (ESV, 1 Peter 5:7)

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz based on the themes and insights from **Chapter 6: LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS**. This chapter explores the idea that true love endures every challenge, supports through hardships, and carries the burdens that life may bring. Each question is followed by four answer options.

1. **What does the phrase “Love bears all things” primarily mean as explored in this chapter?**
    A. Love ignores problems by pretending they don’t exist.
    B. Love actively endures, supports, and carries the burdens in relationships.
    C. Love allows difficulties to overwhelm personal growth.
    D. Love only applies to the good times and joyful moments.

2. **Which of the following best illustrates how love bears all things in a relationship context?**
    A. Expecting perfection and giving up at the first sign of difficulty.
    B. Withdrawing when challenges arise to avoid further issues.
    C. Supporting one another through hardships and persevering despite obstacles.
    D. Focusing solely on personal achievements and neglecting mutual needs.
3. **According to the chapter, bearing all things in love requires which of the following virtues?**
    A. Impulsiveness and immediate gratification.
    B. Patience, resilience, and forgiveness.
    C. Ignorance of personal challenges.
    D. A focus only on external expressions of affection.
4. **What long-term impact does the practice of "love bears all things" have on a community or relationship?**
    A. It creates superficial relationships devoid of trust.
    B. It strengthens bonds and builds mutual resilience over time.
    C. It leads to a cycle of unresolved conflict.
    D. It diminishes the need for honest communication.
5. **How does the chapter suggest that love helps overcome adversity?**
    A. By encouraging self-sacrifice and unwavering support during difficult times.
    B. By allowing individuals to ignore personal struggles.

C. By promoting avoidance of conflict at all costs.
D. By replacing personal responsibility with dependency.

6. **In the face of personal challenges, what perspective does "love bears all things" inspire?**
   A. Viewing challenges as insurmountable obstacles that isolate us.
   B. Embracing personal growth and offering support to both oneself and others.
   C. Rejecting any form of hardship as a sign of failed relationships.
   D. Depending solely on external validation to overcome difficulties.
7. **What role does empathy play in the concept of "love bears all things" according to the chapter?**
   A. Empathy is secondary to strict adherence to rules.
   B. Empathy is the foundation for sharing and easing the burdens of others.
   C. Empathy causes individuals to become overly self-critical.
   D. Empathy is irrelevant when facing major challenges.
8. **Which statement best encapsulates the meaning of "love bears all things" as described in the chapter?**
   A. Love is conditional and stops when difficulties arise.
   B. Love is an active process that endures, supports, and uplifts even in overwhelming circumstances.
   C. Love should be set aside when facing a crisis.

D. Love is simply an abstract emotion with little practical impact.

9. **What is a practical implication of living out "love bears all things" in everyday relationships?**
    A. Avoiding conflict by keeping quiet about underlying issues.
    B. Offering unwavering support and encouragement, even when situations are challenging.
    C. Relying on others to resolve personal hardships.
    D. Prioritizing one's own comfort over the well-being of others.
10. **Ultimately, what transformation does the chapter envision when love bears all things?**
    A. Relationships become fragile and easily broken by adversity.
    B. Individuals and communities are renewed, finding strength and growth through mutual support in hardship.
    C. Love becomes purely transactional and conditional.
    D. Hardships lead to a permanent breakdown of trust and connection.

Answer Key

1. **B**
2. **C**
3. **B**
4. **B**

5. **A**
6. **B**
7. **B**
8. **B**
9. **B**
10. **B**

These questions are crafted to help readers reflect on how a love that bears all things transforms relationships through resilience, empathy, and unwavering support, even amidst life's toughest challenges.

7 LOVE BELIEVETH ALL THINGS

"I CAN DO ALL THIS THROUGH HIM WHO GIVES ME STRENGTH." (NIV, PHILIPPIANS 4:13)

The Bible teaches a healthy dose of self-esteem and self-confidence. The Bible also teaches to place no confidence in the flesh. "For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God, and glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh:" (RV, Philippians 3:3) This is not a passage that teaches to have no self-confidence. It is a passage that teaches to have no confidence in the sinful nature of man. There are many passages that teach us to believe in ourselves in the sense of having self-confidence that God is the ultimate fulfillment and empowerment of all that He has called us to do and be.

"There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage: for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I sware unto their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest." (RV, Joshua 1:5-7)

A careful reading of the passage from Joshua reveals that God wants His servant to be filled with confidence. Many of

the things that God sends us to do are no less than daunting tasks. He does not want His servant to be shaking in his boots about everything that comes against him. The servant of God will face insurmountable odds at times. The way seems impossible, yet God told Joshua to be strong and of good courage. That means that if God has chosen you, he has His perfect reasons for His choice. Therefore, our confidence is not rooted in ourselves, rather in the one who has done the choosing. The reality is, God believes in us much more than we believe in ourselves.

"And Moses said unto the LORD, Oh Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: for I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue. And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh *a man* dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? is it not I the LORD? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt speak." (RV, Exodus 4:10 -12)

Moses did not believe in himself to do what God had called him to do. God had to remind him as to who was the Creator of Moses mouth. Moses had to see God's love through all of this. It was a love that believed in Moses more than Moses believed in himself. Believers struggle intensely with this issue. Do you? If so, you need to see the picture of God's love that believes in you more than you believe in yourself. "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding." (NIV, Proverbs 3:5)

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz based on the themes and insights from **Chapter 7: LOVE BELIEVETH ALL THINGS**. This chapter examines the idea that true love is defined by a profound, unwavering trust—choosing to see the best in others and circumstances even in the midst of challenges.

1. **What is the primary meaning of the phrase "Love believeth all things" as presented in this chapter?**
    A. Love accepts everything without discernment.
    B. Love extends deep trust, choosing to see the possibility of goodness even when evidence is not readily apparent.
    B. Love turns a blind eye to any form of error.
    C. Love considers skepticism an essential part of the relationship.
2. **According to the chapter, how does believing all things impact our relationships?**
    A. It encourages excessive naivety, leading to inevitable disappointment.
    B. It lays a foundation of trust that deepens connections and fosters resilience during hardships.
    B. It neglects the need for accountability in dealing with problems.
    C. It forces unrealistic expectations upon others.

3. **Which statement best captures the spirit of "Love believeth all things" as described in the chapter?**
    A. Love must ignore all issues for peace to prevail.
    B. Love chooses to trust in the potential for positive change, even amid uncertainty or past mistakes.
    B. Love simply acquiesces without encouraging growth.
    C. Love remains static, unwilling to engage with vulnerabilities.
4. **What role does the act of "believing" play in magnifying the transformative power of love?**
    A. It invites blind trust that disconnects love from reality.
    B. It fuels hope and optimism, enabling individuals to support one another through challenges and foster continual growth.
    B. It eliminates the need for healthy skepticism and caution.
    C. It compromises personal boundaries by ignoring red flags.
5. **How does the chapter illustrate the benefits of practicing "Love believeth all things" in everyday interactions?**
    A. By suggesting that suspending judgment always prevents conflict.
    B. By creating an atmosphere of mutual support where honest communication and willingness to forgive are nurtured.
    B. By advocating for unconditional acceptance regardless of accountability.
    C. By encouraging people to overlook practical concerns in favor of idealistic trust.

6. **What challenge associated with "Love believeth all things" does the chapter highlight?**
    A. That unwavering belief naturally leads to exploitation by others.
    B. That maintaining a balance between trust and discernment is essential to avoid being misled while still offering love.
    B. That love's belief should never be questioned, no matter the circumstance.
    C. That skepticism and doubt have no place in loving relationships.
7. **In moments when discrepancies or doubts arise, how does the chapter advise believers to practice "Love believeth all things"?**
    A. By accepting everything uncritically without seeking clarity.
    B. By holding onto hope and faith while engaging in thoughtful discussion to address and resolve uncertainties.
    B. By immediately dismissing any doubts that might challenge trust.
    C. By allowing suspicions to override the commitment to love.
8. **What long-term effect does "Love believeth all things" have on a community, according to the chapter?**
    A. It may cause groups to become overly idealistic and ignore real concerns.
    B. It fosters a culture of openness, mutual respect, and continual personal and collective renewal.
    B. It encourages passivity and the avoidance of necessary conflict.

C. It leads to relationships that are vulnerable to repeated disappointments.

9. **How does the chapter suggest one can reconcile love and truth when facing ambiguous situations?**
   A. By prioritizing love to the extent that truth is neglected entirely.
   B. By trusting that love's optimism can coexist with a respectful pursuit of truth, guiding one to seek understanding without casting undue judgment.
   B. By choosing truth over love to maintain clarity in relationships.
   C. By ignoring any discrepancies as minor details that do not affect trust.
10. **Ultimately, what transformation does the chapter envision when love "believeth all things"?**
   A. Relationships become fragile, as blind trust leads to continual hurt.
   B. Individuals and communities experience profound renewal, enabling them to overcome challenges through hope, trust, and a willingness to see the best in others.
   B. Love dissolves into an unrealistic ideal that never meets the needs of genuine connection.
   C. Reliance on love's belief discourages necessary critical reflection, stunting personal growth.

Answer Key

1. **B**

2. **B**
3. **B**
4. **B**
5. **B**
6. **B**
7. **B**
8. **B**
9. **B**
10. **B**

These questions are designed to encourage reflection on how embracing a stance of belief and trust can transform both personal relationships and wider communities, even in the face of challenges or uncertainties.

.

8 LOVE ALWAYS HOPES

"NOW FAITH IS CONFIDENCE IN WHAT WE HOPE FOR AND ASSURANCE ABOUT WHAT WE DO NOT SEE." (NIV, HEBREWS 11:1)

At the very grassroots of the Christian faith is the great hope of the resurrection of the dead. Jesus demonstrated His power over death numerous times during His ministry. The widow's son in Nain is one such example. The Lord told the woman to stop crying. This is because we have such great hope over death in Christ. Read the passage from Luke's Gospel below.

"Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him. As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out--the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her. When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry." Then he went up and touched the bier they were carrying him on, and the bearers stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother. They were all filled with awe and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help his people." This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding country." (NIV, Luke 7:11-17)

The apostle Paul put it this way to Timothy. “Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him.” (NIV, 2 Timothy 2:11) The apostle John recalled Jesus words in his Gospel. “Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.” (NIV, John 14:19) There is no greater hope in this world than victory over the grave and death. Yet, that is exactly the loving hope that has been committed to all who come and trust Christ.

There is no worse situation that faces humanity than death. Death is the worst! These passages place all other issues into perspective. Our plans and ambitions take a back seat to the great hope of the Gospel of Christ. What a great hope the believer possesses! We can face our lives and then the end with a hope that produces a peace that surpasses understanding. “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (NIV, Romans 15:13)

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz based on the themes from **Chapter 8: LOVE ALWAYS HOPES**. This chapter discusses how enduring hope is an intrinsic part of love—one that maintains optimism, inspires resilience, and encourages both personal and communal renewal even amid adversity.

1. **What does the phrase "Love always hopes" primarily imply?**
    A. Love anticipates immediate success in every situation.
    B. Love remains optimistic, expecting positive change even in difficult circumstances.
    B. Love guarantees a flawless outcome regardless of challenges.
    C. Love ignores reality and focuses solely on dreams.
2. **How does hope influence those who love deeply, according to the chapter?**
    A. It causes them to overlook all issues and remain naive.
    B. It inspires persistence and resilience, encouraging them to move forward despite setbacks.
    B. It makes them dependent on constant external validation.
    C. It leads them to avoid confronting problems head-on.
3. **Which best describes how hope functions within loving relationships?**
    A. It promotes a passive attitude that prevents change.
    B. It fuels the belief that challenges can be overcome and better days lie ahead.
    B. It dismisses any negative experience as irrelevant.
    C. It forces partners to ignore reality in favor of wishful thinking.
4. **In practical terms, what behavior exemplifies "Love always hopes"?**

A. Withholding effort after repeated disappointments.

B. Consistently seeking the best in others and remaining committed to improvement despite setbacks.

B. Avoiding difficult conversations to keep the peace permanently.

C. Relying solely on past successes as a measure for future outcomes.

5. **How does the chapter connect enduring hardship with the hope inherent in love?**

A. Hardships are seen as signs to abandon hope altogether.

B. Hope enables individuals to endure trials by nurturing forgiveness and persistence in the face of adversity.

B. Hardship is used as evidence that hope is misplaced.

C. Enduring pain is portrayed as unrelated to the hopeful nature of love.

6. **What role does hope play in rebuilding trust after a setback?**

A. It allows one to disregard past mistakes without reflection.

B. It creates a foundation where forgiveness can flourish and trust can be gradually renewed.

B. It instantly erases any memory of conflict.

C. It minimizes the need for open communication about the past.

7. **According to the chapter, how does hope contribute to personal growth within a relationship?**

A. By encouraging individuals to remain static and avoid change.
B. By motivating continuous self-improvement and a proactive attitude toward overcoming obstacles.
B. By fostering a cycle of dependency on another for reassurance.
C. By promoting the belief that growth is unnecessary when love is present.

8. **What connection between hope and faith is highlighted in this chapter?**
A. Hope completely replaces the need for faith.
B. Hope and faith work together, with hope reinforcing faith through an optimistic outlook, even when outcomes are uncertain.
B. Faith undermines hope by demanding evidence of positive change.
C. They are separate qualities that never interact in the context of love.
9. **Which statement best captures the transformative power of hope as discussed in the chapter?**
A. Hope is a temporary feeling that fades once challenges are met.
B. Hope transforms adversity into opportunities for healing, growth, and renewed connection.
B. Hope demands perfection and dismisses human fallibility.
C. Hope encourages a denial of the difficulties inherent in any relationship.
10. **What broader impact does the hopeful quality of love have on community life?**

A. It cultivates a culture of relentless positivity and collective progress by inspiring every individual to maintain optimism.
B. It isolates community members by focusing solely on individual improvement.
C. It creates a superficial environment where challenges are overlooked.
D. It fosters rigid expectations that hinder open dialogue and change.

Answer Key

1. **B**
2. **B**
3. **B**
4. **B**
5. **B**
6. **B**
7. **B**
8. **B**
9. **B**
10. **A**

These questions are designed to prompt reflection on how a hope-filled love underpins resilience and trust in relationships and communities.

9 LOVE ALWAYS PERSEVERES

"NOT ONLY SO, BUT WE ALSO GLORY IN OUR SUFFERINGS, BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT SUFFERING PRODUCES PERSEVERANCE; PERSEVERANCE, CHARACTER; AND CHARACTER, HOPE. AND HOPE DOES NOT PUT US TO SHAME, BECAUSE GOD'S LOVE HAS BEEN POURED OUT INTO OUR HEARTS THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO HAS BEEN GIVEN TO US." (NIV, ROMANS 5:3-5)

The above passage from Paul's letter to the Romans reveals an incredible tapestry. Look carefully as to where perseverance is placed in this tapestry. Now we are beginning to understand that getting to see and know the picture of Christ in the Bible is getting to know all the facets of Christ's love at work in our lives. They are all working together for our good. "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (NIV, Romans 8:28) This means that all of these elements are being woven together into an eternal tapestry that looks like Christ. So, let us dispel the image of a first century Jewish guy with a beard and robe. Even if those images are accurate, they do not really matter because that is not how God is transforming us. He is transforming us into Christlikeness. "Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." (NIV, James 1:4) God uses persevering love, or in other words, He uses love that perseveres to shape and remake

us into vessels that are useful to the Master.

There is no doubt that this is a lifetime process. It will not end until we are in heaven with Christ forever. “Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” (NIV, 1 John 3:2) God’s love perseveres until the end. We are His workmanship. “For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (NIV, Ephesians 2:10) We are the clay, and he is the potter. He is shaping us through many tools in His hands. One of these important tools is persevering love. It never gives up on us. No, not ever! “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.” (NIV, Hebrews 13:8)

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz based on the themes and insights from **Chapter 9: LOVE ALWAYS PERSEVERES**. This chapter emphasizes that true love endures, works through challenges, and remains steadfast even in the face of overwhelming obstacles. Each question is followed by four answer options.

1. **What does the phrase "Love always perseveres" primarily suggest in the chapter?**
    A. Love is occasional and conditional.
    B. Love endures every hardship and continues despite difficulties.
    B. Love requires constant validation to survive.
    C. Love retreats when faced with obstacles.
2. **How does the chapter characterize the act of persevering in love?**
    A. By ignoring problems and pretending they don't exist.
    B. By actively engaging with challenges and remaining committed through adversity.
    B. By expecting problems to resolve themselves without effort.
    C. By depending solely on pleasant times for connection.
3. **Which scenario best illustrates the concept that "Love always perseveres"?**
    A. Exiting a relationship at the first sign of conflict.
    B. Facing challenges together, working through issues, and growing stronger as a result.
    B. Avoiding any discussion of difficulties to maintain appearances.
    C. Expecting a partner to change without mutual effort.
4. **What benefit does persevering love bring to relationships, as discussed in the chapter?**
    A. It creates a cycle of repeated mistakes without resolution.
    B. It deepens trust and fosters long-term growth through shared resilience.

B. It leads to complacency by accepting mediocrity.
C. It diminishes the need for honest communication.

5. **What role does forgiveness play in the context of love that always perseveres?**
   A. Forgiveness strengthens bonds by allowing both partners to move beyond hurt and recommit to each other.
   B. Forgiveness is secondary because perseverance alone is enough.
   C. Forgiveness is only necessary when challenges become overwhelming.
   D. Forgiveness undermines the importance of facing issues directly.
6. **Which of the following characteristics is essential for love to persevere, according to the chapter?**
   A. Resilience and an unwavering commitment.
   B. A focus on quick fixes and temporary relief.
   C. Emotional detachment to avoid pain.
   D. An attitude of indifferent acceptance.
7. **How does persevering love transform challenges, based on the chapter's insights?**
   A. It makes challenges disappear naturally over time.
   B. It turns obstacles into opportunities for strengthening bonds and mutual growth.
   B. It minimizes problems by ignoring them.
   C. It transforms conflicts into reasons for separation.
8. **In what way does the chapter suggest that persevering love affects personal development?**

   A. It keeps individuals stuck in old patterns by avoiding change.
   B. It fosters continuous self-improvement as couples learn from and overcome hardships.
   B. It lessens the need for personal reflection by focusing solely on the relationship.
   C. It discourages risk-taking in favor of a static emotional state.

9. **How is the "always" in "Love always perseveres" understood in this chapter?**
   A. As a temporary measure that only applies in good times.
   B. As a steadfast, unyielding promise that love endures through every season of life.
   B. As a theoretical ideal rarely seen in real life.
   C. As an obligation that must be fulfilled only under certain conditions.

10. **Ultimately, what transformation does persevering love bring to individuals and communities?**
   A. It builds superficial connections that avoid deeper emotional risk.
   B. It creates robust relationships and resilient communities that thrive by overcoming adversity together.
   B. It encourages a mindset of tolerating abuse without change.
   C. It leads to stubbornness that prevents necessary growth.

Answer Key

1. **B**

2. **B**
3. **B**
4. **B**
5. **A**
6. **A**
7. **B**
8. **B**
9. **B**
10. **B**

These questions are designed to help readers reflect on the enduring nature of love, how it actively overcomes obstacles, and the transformative power it holds in relationships and communities.

10 LOVE NEVER FAILS

"THEN EVERYONE DESERTED HIM AND FLED." (NIV, MARK, 14:50)

There it is, every one of His disciples fled. They all sought their own safety. Nonetheless, the story did not end there in failure because God's love did not. Love that cannot fail did not stop at the failures of His disciples. It did not stop at the failures of the nation of Israel. It did not stop at the failures of the entire world. It kept on walking right up out of the grave in total victory over sin and death. You have failed, I have failed, and we have all failed God miserably, but God's love has not failed us. God was in total control of it all. "Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen." (NIV, Acts 4:27-28)

His disciples eventually, beginning with a woman, began to crawl out of hiding after the crucifixion. "Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance." (NIV, John 20:1) It is possible that even Mary was using the cover of darkness to approach the Roman guarded tomb. Then after Mary found the tomb empty, she excitedly reported her findings to the big brave men. Then a couple of the disciples came to check it out.

Boy, they had so much faith it was blinding! One might say it was so blinding we cannot see it at all! “They found the stone rolled away from the tomb.” (NIV, Luke 24:2) This is the power of unfailing love. This is the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

What can we surmise from all of this? The Gospel is based on the promises of God, not our ability to believe those promises. If it were, Christ would have never risen. Though the Gospel is to be received individually by faith, there is nothing faithful about our faith that would deserve the resurrection of Christ. He did it for you, me, and the entire world. His love never fails! “But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere.” (NIV, 2 Corinthians 2:14)

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz based on the themes and insights from **Chapter 10: LOVE NEVER FAILS**. This chapter explains that true love is unfailing—steadfast and enduring regardless of hardships. The questions below invite you to reflect on and internalize the message that even in the midst of challenges, real love remains constant.

1. **What is the central message conveyed by the phrase "Love never fails" in this chapter?**
    A. Love is fragile and easily broken by circumstances.
    B. True love remains unwavering and constant, regardless of trials.
    C. Love depends entirely on external successes and ideal conditions.
    D. Love is temporary and must be continuously reinvented.
2. **According to the chapter, how does love demonstrate its unfailing nature during adversity?**
    A. By denying that hardships exist in relationships.
    B. By transforming obstacles into opportunities for growth and bonding.
    C. By avoiding conflicts so that problems are never addressed.
    D. By expecting others to adapt without any mutual effort.
3. **Which scenario best illustrates the concept "Love never fails" as described in the chapter?**
    A. Disengaging from a relationship after a single setback.
    B. Only showing affection when life is easy and predictable.
    C. Ignoring conflicts to maintain a façade of harmony.
    D. Persisting in a relationship by confronting challenges and continuously investing in one another.
4. **How does the chapter view the relationship between embracing personal imperfections and unfailing love?**

A. It suggests that love ignores or hides personal weaknesses.
B. It encourages acknowledging and growing from imperfections as an integral part of true love.
C. It argues that only perfection can ensure lasting love.
D. It maintains that flaws should be concealed to preserve love's strength.

5. **What role does commitment play in ensuring that "love never fails", as outlined in the chapter?**
   A. It is a minor aspect compared to spontaneous feelings.
   B. It is a fleeting sentiment that comes and goes with mood.
   C. It provides the steadfast foundation necessary for enduring love amid life's challenges.
   D. It becomes an obligation rather than a genuine connection.
6. **In the context of community relationships, how is the unfailing nature of love described?**
   A. It eliminates all conflicts and misunderstandings immediately.
   B. It strengthens communal bonds by fostering resilience and shared support.
   C. It leads individuals to compromise their personal values.
   D. It depends solely on an idealized vision of togetherness without addressing real issues.
7. **What does the chapter suggest about the permanence of true love?**

A. True love diminishes over time without constant reinvention.
B. Its strength relies on external factors and ideal circumstances.
C. It endures through the cycles of change, remaining steadfast even when circumstances shift.
D. It must be reestablished repeatedly after each conflict.

8. **How does the chapter illustrate that love provides hope even when other efforts may falter?**

A. By offering resilience and encouraging us to rise after setbacks.
B. By insisting that tangible successes are the only proof love endures.
C. By advocating the denial of reality until circumstances improve.
D. By focusing solely on the positive aspects while ignoring challenges.

9. **Which challenge does the chapter highlight in living out a love that "never fails"?**
A. The difficulty of practicing unconditional trust in every situation.
B. The tension between enduring personal pain and the call for unconditional giving.
C. The pressure to maintain an unrealistic standard of perfection.
D. The need for external validation to continue loving.

10. **Ultimately, what personal transformation does embracing the truth that "love never fails" bring, according to the chapter?**
A. It leads to emotional withdrawal to protect oneself from repeated hurt.

B. It creates a dependency that discourages individuality.
C. It instills a deep sense of inner peace and resilience, fostering stronger, more meaningful relationships.
D. It establishes superficial connections that avoid the risk of conflict.

Answer Key

1. **B**
2. **B**
3. **D**
4. **B**
5. **C**
6. **B**
7. **C**
8. **A**
9. **B**
10. **C**

These questions are designed to invite reflection on how a love that "never fails" is more than just an ideal, it is a practical, transformational force that endures through every season of life.

11 LOVE REMAINS

"ON THE EVENING OF THAT FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK, WHEN THE DISCIPLES WERE TOGETHER, WITH THE DOORS LOCKED FOR FEAR OF THE JEWISH LEADERS, JESUS CAME AND STOOD AMONG THEM AND SAID, "PEACE BE WITH YOU!" (NIV, JOHN 20:19)

If Christ's mission had depended on the faithfulness of His disciples, the entire project would have been aborted long ago. Since His disciples had first discovered His resurrection, they soon slipped back into unbelief. So, what did God do about it? His love sought them and remained with them forever. "Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." (NIV, John 20:27) By the way, this command of Christ to Thomas was not for him alone. It was for all of us.

What incredible words of power! They are rooted in a love that remains faithful even when we are not. That is grace! That is the Finished Work of Christ! The Bible says that He will never leave you or forsake you for any reason. "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." (NIV, Hebrews 13:5) It also says that nothing shall separate us from His love.

> "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or

> famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (NIV, Romans 8:35-39)

What a powerful report. Nothing shall ever separate us from God's love. His is a love that remains forever!

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz based on the themes and insights from **Chapter 11: LOVE REMAINS**. This chapter explores how true, enduring love persists even when all else fades, providing a foundation for personal growth, reconciliation, and lasting relationships.

1. **What is the primary message conveyed by the phrase "Love remains" as discussed in this chapter?**
    A. Love is fleeting and dependent on external situations.

B. Love endures over time, persisting even when other things change or disappear.
C. Love is only valid during periods of happiness.
D. Love requires constant renewal to be sustained.

2. **Which statement best reflects the idea that "Love remains"?**
   A. Love fades as soon as challenges emerge.
   B. Love continues to be the strongest and last-lasting virtue, even through hardships.
   C. Love is effective only when supported by material or external factors.
   D. Love is temporary unless it is frequently re-evaluated.
3. **According to the chapter, how does acknowledging that "Love remains" influence personal growth?**
   A. It makes individuals complacent, relying solely on past affections.
   B. It inspires resilience and maturation by encouraging one to overcome adversity with steadfast commitment.
   C. It has little to no impact on the development of character.
   D. It discourages self-reflection by idealizing relationships.
4. **How does "Love remains" differ from other virtues such as faith and hope, as presented in the chapter?**
   A. Faith and hope are temporary, but love is the permanent foundation.
   B. Although faith and hope may fluctuate, love endures as the ultimate and most enduring quality.

C. Unlike love, both faith and hope are subject to change with circumstances.
D. Faith and hope are more influential than love in challenging times.

5. **What role does the enduring nature of love play in conflict resolution according to the chapter?**
   A. It causes individuals to ignore problems and suppress their feelings.
   B. It fosters forgiveness and reconciliation, helping resolve conflicts while strengthening bonds.
   C. It makes disagreements seem less significant, leading to unresolved issues.
   D. It delays direct confrontation to preserve harmony at all costs.
6. **Which scenario best illustrates the concept that "Love remains"?**
   A. An infatuation that diminishes once initial excitement fades.
   B. A friendship that persists despite life changes, misunderstandings, and adversities.
   C. A relationship that dissolves when faced with minor disagreements.
   D. A connection built solely on shared successes that evaporates in times of failure.
7. **How does recognizing that "Love remains" empower individuals to face life's inevitable changes?**
   A. It leads them to cling to the past instead of adapting.
   B. It provides hope and resilience, encouraging a focus on long-term commitment and mutual support.

C. It causes them to ignore current challenges in favor of nostalgic memories.
D. It results in unrealistic expectations that hinder personal progress.

8. **According to the chapter, what is one challenge that tests whether love truly remains?**
   A. The desire for immediate gratification in relationships.
   B. The need for constant external affirmation.
   C. The transient nature of life's hardships and external changes.
   D. The pursuit of perfection in all aspects of a relationship.
9. **In what way is "Love remains" presented as the ultimate measure of a relationship's success?**
   A. It is seen as an ideal that rarely manifests in real life.
   B. It is the enduring force that sustains and nurtures connections despite life's challenges.
   C. It depends solely on periodic acts of kindness and diligence.
   D. It is important only during the early, passionate stages of a relationship.
10. **How does the chapter suggest one can nurture a love that remains throughout life's changes?**
    A. By focusing exclusively on an idealized vision of constant happiness.
    B. By eliminating all conflicts and avoiding vulnerability.
    C. By embracing vulnerability, committing to mutual growth, and practicing continual forgiveness.
    D. By expecting perfection and immediate resolution in every situation.

Answer Key

1. **B**
2. **B**
3. **B**
4. **B**
5. **B**
6. **B**
7. **B**
8. **C**
9. **B**
10. **C**

These questions are crafted to encourage reflection on how enduring love, one that remains despite the ebb and flow of life's experiences, serves as a cornerstone for personal resilience and deep, lasting relationships.

12 LOVE IS THE GREATEST OF THESE

"BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO PERSEVERES UNDER TRIAL BECAUSE, HAVING STOOD THE TEST, THAT PERSON WILL RECEIVE THE CROWN OF LIFE THAT THE LORD HAS PROMISED TO THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." (NIV, JAMES 1:12)

We are approaching the end of Paul's great description of love which is really his description of Christ. If life is the crown, then what are the jewels in the crown? Certainly love, faith, and hope are the central gems of the Christian Walk and faith. As rare and precious as these three gems are, one stands out as more valuable than the others. It is the gem of Christ's love. This gem cannot be held in our hands like a diamond or ruby. No, it is the principle and value of what Christ did for us all at the cross. That principle should be placed at the very top of all our thoughts in life. We should never leave it or displace it as the church of Ephesus did through leaving their first love. "Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken the love you had at first." (NIV, Revelation 2:4) Notice that he did not misplace His love to them; it was the other way around.

The believer engages in a deep struggle and spiritual warfare daily. Much of this warfare is in our minds. The mind is a battlefield that at times is raging, with doubts, temptation, the world, the flesh, and the Devil. However, we are more than conquerors over all of this. "No, in all these

things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." (NIV, Romans 8:37)

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz based on the themes and insights from **Chapter 12: LOVE IS THE GREATEST OF THESE**. This chapter emphasizes that among all virtues and qualities in life, be they spiritual, emotional, or relational, love stands supreme. The quiz questions encourage reflection on why love is presented as the highest, most enduring virtue and how it transcends all others.

1. **What is the primary message of the phrase "Love is the greatest of these" as discussed in Chapter 12?**
    A. Love is just one of several important virtues on the same level.
    B. Love surpasses all other virtues and remains the most enduring measure of character.
    C. Love is only important in personal relationships and not in broader contexts.
    D. Love must be constantly renewed to be valuable.
2. **According to the chapter, why is love considered superior to faith and hope?**
    A. Because faith and hope are unreliable over time.

B. Because while faith and hope may fade or be fulfilled, love endures beyond all circumstances.
C. Because faith and hope only apply during moments of crisis.
D. Because love is easier to demonstrate than faith or hope.

3. **How does the chapter illustrate that love is the greatest of all virtues?**
   A. By suggesting that love is fleeting compared to other emotions.
   B. By showing that true love transforms lives, overcomes challenges, and remains constant when all else is temporary.
   C. By arguing that love is common and thus less unique.
   D. By stating that love requires less effort than other virtues.
4. **Which scenario best reflects the idea that "love is the greatest of these"?**
   A. A person who prioritizes personal gain over nurturing relationships.
   B. A relationship where passion fades quickly, leaving nothing behind.
   C. A lifelong partnership that endures hardship, nurtures growth, and builds lasting trust.
   D. An occasional act of kindness forgotten after the moment passes.
5. **What does the chapter suggest about the nature of love compared to other admirable qualities?**
   A. Love is just another transient emotion subject to change.

B. Love is an unconditional, transformative force that fuels and uplifts every aspect of life.
C. Love is less important, as it does not contribute much to personal growth.
D. Love must be measured by material or visible successes.

6. **How is love portrayed as having a timeless quality, according to the chapter?**
   A. Love is limited by the passage of time and eventually loses its impact.
   B. Love is the enduring force that outlasts temporal challenges and remains relevant across generations.
   C. Love must be reinvented in every new era to retain its meaning.
   D. Love is only significant within the context of a specific time or culture.
7. **In what way does the chapter connect the greatness of love to personal transformation?**
   A. It suggests that change comes only from self-discipline, not from love.
   B. It emphasizes that when love guides actions and decisions, it initiates a lasting transformation in character and relationships.
   C. It insists that love sidelines growth in favor of comfort and routine.
   D. It shows that personal transformation is irrelevant when compared to intellectual achievements.
8. **What impact does a love that "remains" have on a community, as detailed in the chapter?**

A. It creates divisions because it demands too much emotional investment.
B. It unites communities by providing a foundation of mutual respect, support, and enduring compassion.
C. It leads to dependency and stifles individual creativity.
D. It only benefits close family relationships but not wider society.

9. **How does the chapter advise readers to cultivate a love that is truly the greatest of these?**
   A. By focusing solely on short-term successes in relationships.
   B. By committing to continual growth, practicing forgiveness, and valuing open, honest communication in all interactions.
   C. By limiting emotional exposure to guard against potential hurt.
   D. By relying exclusively on external achievements to validate their self-worth.
10. **Ultimately, what transformation does embracing the truth that "love is the greatest of these" bring to an individual's life?**
   A. It encourages a temporary feeling of happiness but little long-term impact.
   B. It results in avoiding difficult conversations to maintain peace at any cost.
   C. It leads to a profound inner peace and resilience, strengthening relationships and nourishing personal growth even when other elements fade.
   D. It creates unrealistic expectations that overwhelm daily life.

Answer Key

1. **B**
2. **B**
3. **B**
4. **C**
5. **B**
6. **B**
7. **B**
8. **B**
9. **B**
10. **C**

These questions are designed to encourage deep reflection on why love is portrayed as the superior and most enduring virtue in this chapter. They invite readers to consider how embracing such a love can transform personal lives and communities alike. Would you like to discuss further how these principles can be applied in real-life situations or explore additional reflection prompts on the enduring power of love?

13 REACHING MATURITY

"WHEN I WAS A CHILD, I TALKED LIKE A CHILD, I THOUGHT LIKE A CHILD, I REASONED LIKE A CHILD. WHEN I BECAME A MAN, I PUT THE WAYS OF CHILDHOOD BEHIND ME. FOR NOW WE SEE ONLY A REFLECTION AS IN A MIRROR; THEN WE SHALL SEE FACE TO FACE. NOW I KNOW IN PART; THEN I SHALL KNOW FULLY, EVEN AS I AM FULLY KNOWN." (NIV, 1 CORINTHIANS 13:11-12)

Without a comprehensive understanding and assimilation of love a believer will not reach spiritual maturity. This author cannot help but think that Paul's reference to childhood was not a reference to chronological age, but rather a reference to the years he spent futilely seeking maturity through the white-knuckle grip of the law. He thought that the whole episode in his life was now quite childish. He spent many of those years relentlessly pursuing righteousness through the law as a Pharisee. His severity as a legalist seemed foolish after meeting the person of love who is the risen Christ on the road to Damascus. His touching testimony in Acts chapter 22 tells the story of a man who once was driven by loveless religion and now was converted and transformed by the person of love. The power of this testimony is sheer grace. It is the grassroots of the Christian Gospel. Read it carefully and consider how far the Church has drifted from the power of the unadulterated

Gospel of grace.

> “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I studied under Gamaliel and was thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors. I was just as zealous for God as any of you are today. I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison, as the high priest and all the Council can themselves testify. I even obtained letters from them to their associates in Damascus and went there to bring these people as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished. “About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, “Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?” “Who are you, Lord?” I asked. “I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting,” he replied. My companions saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who was speaking to me. “What shall I do, Lord?” I asked. “Get up,' the Lord said, 'and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do.” My companions led me by the hand into Damascus because the brilliance of the light had blinded me. “A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all

the Jews living there. He stood beside me and said, “Brother Saul, receive your sight!” And at that very moment I was able to see him. Then he said: “The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. You will be his witness to all people of what you have seen and heard. And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.” “When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance and saw the Lord speaking to me. “Quick!” he said, “Leave Jerusalem immediately, because the people here will not accept your testimony about me.” “Lord,” I replied, “these people know that I went from one synagogue to another to imprison and beat those who believe in you. And when the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I stood there giving my approval and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.” Then the Lord said to me, “Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles.” (NIV, Acts 22:3-21)

Paul recapitulated the essence of his testimony in his letter to the church at Philippi. Within Paul we see the stark contrast and spiritual warfare between the blind legalist and the man who saw the picture of perfect love. He came to

understand that through losing all that he once was, which amounted to a pile of religious hypocrisy, he gained the true knowledge of the love of God.

"For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh- though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ--the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. I want to know Christ--yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death." (NIV, Philippians 3:3-10)

At the very center of the Pharisee is the principle of works. The Pharisee is proud and self-centered. His personality is self-righteous and hypocritical. He struts about in a religiously boastful manner. He enjoys being noticed publicly for his good deeds and religiosity. It is exactly this personality that is set against the character of Christ in the

Gospels. These men thought that they were the epitome of spiritual maturity, and they wanted all to take notice. Well, Jesus did take notice, but not in the way they wanted. Christ publicly exposed their charade. They were offended, even to the point of hate and murder. This clearly proves Christ's point. How could men who conspire to murder be spiritually mature at all?

People in the church today believe that activities will bring spiritual growth that will eventually lead to maturity. It will not! Only the full revelation of the person of Christ and His loving grace will accomplish this. Nothing else can. However, there are Pharisees in the church today. They secretly hate Christ's message of grace and love. They reject God's plan of the Holy Spirit's work of transformation and promote their own works. These people are wolves in sheep's clothing. They claim to know Christ but reject everything that Christ taught.

At one time Paul was one of them. He was a proud and hardened Pharisee. His heart was cold as stone. He was a loveless legalist. He was all about his religion but rejected God's love. However, God's love was greater than Paul's hypocrisy. God saved him through the foolishness and weakness of the cross. People still think that religion is the way to God. They are wrong! God wants people to depend on the foolish message of the cross. The legalist from Tarsus became the apostle of grace and love to the world in Christ's name. The list of eight things that Christ's love is not, match the Pharisees perfectly. Read the list carefully. If the shoe

fits get rid of it and put on Christ.

Eight Negatives that Christ's Love is Not

1 It does not envy - The Pharisees were envious of His popularity! "So the Pharisees said to one another, "See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!" (NIV, John 12:19)

2 It does not boast - The Pharisees were boastful! "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. (11) The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. (13) And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. (14) I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (KJV, Luke 18:10-14)

3 It is not proud – The Pharisees were proud. "At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat them. When the

Pharisees saw this, they said to him, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath." (NIV, Matthew 12:1-2)

4 It does not dishonor others -The Pharisees dishonored Christ. "Then they spit in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him" (NIV, Matthew 26:67)

5 It is not self-seeking - The Pharisees were selfish. Then the Lord said to him, "Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness." (NIV, Luke 11:39)

6 It is not easily angered - The Pharisees grew angry at Christ. "For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God." (NIV, John 5:18)

7 It keeps no record of wrongs – The Pharisees kept records of wrong. "His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (NIV, John 9:2)

8 Love does not delight in evil - The Pharisees delighted in evil. "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the

father of lies." (NIV, John 8:44)

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz based on the themes and insights from **Chapter 13: REACHING MATURITY**. This chapter examines the process of growing into a deep, resilient, and self-aware state where life's challenges become opportunities for transformation. The questions invite reflection on personal, emotional, and spiritual growth as well as the importance of self-awareness, vulnerability, and continuous learning in reaching maturity.

1. **What is the central idea of "reaching maturity" as presented in this chapter?**
    A. Maturity is determined solely by one's age and external achievements.
    B. Maturity is a continuous process of personal and spiritual growth through reflection and transformation.
    C. Maturity means having all the answers and never facing challenges.
    D. Maturity is obtained by rigidly adhering to established traditions without question.
2. **Which factor does the chapter emphasize as most critical in the journey toward maturity?**
    A. Accumulating wealth and status as markers of success.

B. Avoiding risks and challenges to maintain comfort.
C. Embracing continuous self-reflection and a willingness to learn from experiences.
D. Relying solely on external validation for decision-making.

3. **How does the chapter suggest we gauge our progress in reaching maturity?**
   A. By comparing our progress with that of our peers.
   B. By assessing our ability to face adversity with resilience and openness to growth.
   C. By measuring the number of successes or accolades accumulated.
   D. By strictly following routines that shield us from difficulties.
4. **What role does self-awareness play in the process of reaching maturity?**
   A. It is irrelevant compared to external accomplishments.
   B. It is crucial, as it enables understanding of personal strengths and areas for growth.
   C. It only matters in intellectual contexts and not in personal life.
   D. It should be minimized to avoid feelings of vulnerability.
5. **Which of the following best represents a sign of reaching maturity according to the chapter?**
   A. An inability to change one's opinions despite feedback.
   B. The capacity to confront and overcome challenges gracefully, learning from every experience.

C. Complete avoidance of conflict and discomfort at all costs.
D. Relying solely on past achievements to define one's identity.

6. **How is the transformative aspect of maturity described in the chapter?**
   A. As a static state one enters and then never changes.
   B. As an ongoing process in which challenges are reinterpreted as opportunities for personal growth.
   C. As something that concludes once a specific milestone is reached.
   D. As primarily dependent on external circumstances rather than internal reflection.
7. **Which attitude is most conducive to reaching maturity, as discussed in the chapter?**
   A. An impulsive, reactive approach toward handling challenges.
   B. A reflective mindset that values accountability, openness to change, and learning from adversity.
   C. A focus on immediate gratification that discourages long-term planning.
   D. A reliance on strict routines that discourage any form of vulnerability.
8. **In the context of reaching maturity, what does the chapter say about vulnerability?**
   A. Vulnerability is a weakness to be hidden in order to maintain control.
   B. Vulnerability is a strength that signals readiness to acknowledge imperfections and grow.

C. Vulnerability should be avoided to prevent emotional setbacks.
D. Vulnerability only applies to personal relationships, not to overall growth.

9. **How is emotional and spiritual resilience linked to maturity in this chapter?**
   A. Maturity is solely about intellectual maturity and disregards the emotional aspect.
   B. Developing resilience is essential to navigate life's uncertainties and setbacks while continuing to grow.
   C. Resilience is an innate trait that doesn't require cultivation.
   D. Emotional challenges should be bypassed to maintain a facade of maturity.
10. **What is the ultimate outcome of reaching maturity, as described in the chapter?**
   A. A fixed destination where further growth is no longer necessary.
   B. The cessation of challenges through the attainment of perfection.
   C. An ongoing journey marked by deeper self-understanding, continual growth, and enriched relationships with oneself and others.
   D. A focus solely on external rewards without the need for inner transformation.

Answer Key

1. **B**
2. **C**

3. **B**
4. **B**
5. **B**
6. **B**
7. **B**
8. **B**
9. **B**
10. **C**

These questions are crafted to prompt reflection on how embracing challenges, practicing self-awareness, and remaining open to vulnerability form the cornerstone of reaching maturity. They invite readers to consider how maturity is not a final destination but a dynamic, lifelong process of learning and personal evolution.

14 SO, WHAT DOES JESUS LOOK LIKE?

"On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea." I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lamp stands, and among the lamp stands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades. "Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lamp stands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lamp stands are the seven churches." (NIV, Revelation 1:10-20)

I can empathize with John for being afraid when he beheld the risen Christ in all His power and majesty. But when we take a deeper look at this scene, we see that at the center of all this unimaginable power and authority is pure love. In verse 17 Christ told John to not be afraid. Art, religion, and philosophy have made many impressions in people's minds about what Christ looks like. They have presented many images of God. Most of the world's population is theistic, not

atheistic. Most people know that there is a God, but they do not know Him. They do not even know that it is possible to know Him personally. People think that God pays attention to a religious leader such as the Pope or some other high religious figure. They have the false impression that God is too busy to listen to an unimportant person in this world. They think that He has much more important things to do than to bother with trivial matters in this world. He has the universe to run.

Does it really matter what He looks like? It is by far more important to understand what His character is like. It is the opposite from the Pharisees. The Gospels focus our attention on the tension and disagreement between Christ and the Pharisees, but they also surpass this tension. They give us the only true and reliable picture of Christ. It is a picture painted in words. The passages surveyed in this book present many impressions of what Christ is like and many impressions of what Christ is not like. Only from the Word of God can we come to any true picture of Christ. We can clearly see that sinners should not fear coming to Christ just as they are. Without Him we would all be separated from God and His covenants and in the world without hope. "Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world." (NIV, Ephesians 2:12)

Though God does not count sin against those who come to Christ by faith for salvation, this should not be misconstrued. He does not just permit His children to live any way they please. "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires." (NIV, Galatians 5:24) The post-modern liberal gospel is no Gospel at all because it has completely ignored this aspect of God's Word. If a child of God persists in living an unholy lifestyle, this can result in severe chastisement from God. This is unfortunate, but an important aspect of God's love as well. However, these aspects of the

face of Christ should not dim the glorious light that shines toward us in love, acceptance and not displeasure.

He is not a stone-cold heartless God, just waiting to judge us for every wrong thing we do. If that were the case Christ would have never been given on the cross in the first place. The Holy Spirit would have never been sent to help us live the Christian life. Let us never flinch from salvation by grace through faith alone in Christ. Our works count for nothing toward salvation and never will. That offends people. That is because their view of Christ is un-scriptural and warped by legalism. Nonetheless, God can save them too.

So, what did Jesus look like anyway? Well, the answer to that is not really physical, but spiritual. I believe that if the Lord had wanted us to know what He looked like He would have let us in on it a long time ago. Therefore, He looked like the kindness to heal the blind and forgive sinners. He looked like a lamb led to the slaughter. He looked like silence before His accusers. He looked like a loving son to His mother, even when dying on a cross. He looked more brilliant than the noon sun to the proud Saul of Tarsus. He looked like a Shepherd ever watching in sleepless nights over the sheep of His pasture. He looked like a brother willing to do anything for His brethren. He looked like a simple carpenter from Nazareth. He looked like the landscape and heartbeat of ancient Palestine. He looked like the epitome of faithfulness and truth. He looked like love unfeigned. He looked like thousands of years of patience. He looked like the hope of God to a lost and dying world. He looked like a morning star rising in the east upon the hopes and dreams of a very sinful world. His facial lines ran deep, as deep as the valley of the shadow of death. His eyes pierced deeper than the most hidden secret of humanity. He looked like He understood our plight. He looked like a command over even the most raging sea. He looked like our champion over sin and death. He looked weak but was eternally strong. He looked strong but His people did not notice. The contours of His strength gently rolled with the Galilean countryside. He looked like a stream of life-giving

water in a dry place. He looked like the plan of grace moving toward fruition upon the pages of a nation's history. He looked like wisdom but the wise did not care to know Him. He looked like the master plan. He looked like the Master. He looked like God! This is a contour of the Spirit that is being shaped and molded to the image of God through our steps of faith and our lives in Christ.

Do we recognize Him? Do we see Him in our own lives? We cannot see Him without eyes of faith. We can see Him in our sorrow, and when we need someone to comfort our broken hearts. We will see Him when our minds are so tired that we cannot think another thought without it being a painful process. We will see Him when, even after years of trusting and obeying His voice, there still does not seem to be a solace to our souls. We will see Him draw near when our frustrations have turned to exasperation, and all we have left is our heads in our hands. We will see Him when our tears have run dry, and our hearts are still broken. The Lord is there. We will see Him when we are tempted. He can be the strength to endure. If we fall, He can pick us up again. We will see the Lord in the issues of our hearts. He lives in the contours of the deep things that make our lives conform to His purpose. "But God hath revealed [them] unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. (KJV, 1 Corinthians 2:10)

Below is a 10-question multiple-choice quiz based on the themes and insights from **Chapter 14: SO, WHAT DOES JESUS LOOK LIKE?**. This chapter explores the challenges of defining Jesus' physical appearance, the absence of detailed biblical descriptions, and the importance of focusing on His character, teachings, and redemptive work rather than appearance alone.

1. **According to the chapter, what do the Scriptures primarily reveal about Jesus' physical appearance?**
    A. They offer a detailed, step-by-step description of His facial features.
    B. They depict Him as having legendary, supernatural beauty.
    C. They provide little to no information about His outward look.
    D. They state that He had a unique, identifiable style of dress.
2. **What is the chapter's perspective on why the Bible does not focus on describing Jesus' physical features?**
    A. Physical appearance was considered irrelevant compared to His mission and character.
    B. Detailed descriptions were lost over time due to translation errors.
    C. Emphasis was placed on His life, teachings, and redemptive work rather than on His looks.
    D. The biblical authors considered His appearance too extraordinary to record.
3. **How have artistic depictions of Jesus historically varied, as explained in the chapter?**
    A. All artworks conform to a single, historically accurate image.
    B. Artists have portrayed Jesus in ways that reflect their own cultural and ethnic contexts.
    C. Early church leaders established a strict canon for His physical attributes.
    D. Variations occur only in modern art, while ancient depictions remain consistent.

4. **Which of the following best captures the chapter's argument about the significance of Jesus' character over His appearance?**
    A. Physical features determine the divine nature of a person.
    B. His teachings, sacrificial love, and character are far more important than any physical description.
    C. Only those with an admired appearance can truly fulfill a sacred mission.
    D. Focusing on physical traits is essential for correct worship.
5. **What is a common misinterpretation that the chapter warns against when considering Jesus' appearance?**
    A. Assuming that ancient texts offer a clear, objective portrait of His looks.
    B. Believing that scientific evidence has already reconstructed His face perfectly.
    C. Concluding that the varied images of Jesus in art are accurate historical records.
    D. Interpreting His lack of description as an indication of insignificance.
6. **How does the chapter advise believers to "see" Jesus in their spiritual lives?**
    A. By studying every artistic rendition to compare details.
    B. By memorizing outdated physical descriptions.
    C. By focusing on His divine attributes, teachings, and the transformation He offers.
    D. By aspiring to replicate His physical appearance in personal style.
7. **What does the chapter suggest about cultural influence on portrayals of Jesus?**
    A. Cultural contexts have no impact on depictions of His image.
    B. Portraits are often a reflection of the artist's cultural background rather than historical reality.
    C. Early depictions were uniform across all cultures.

   D. Cultural differences validate multiple, equally accurate physical descriptions.
8. **Why might the question "What does Jesus look like?" be less important to the chapter's message?**
   A. Because historical records definitively answer the question.
   B. Because focusing on His appearance risks overshadowing the importance of His life and message.
   C. Because knowing His exact looks is necessary for true faith.
   D. Because the Bible provides enough details for an exact reconstruction.
9. **What evidence does the chapter offer regarding Jesus' likely ethnicity?**
   A. Detailed descriptions in the Gospels provide a complete profile.
   B. Early Christian art documents his refined physical features.
   C. Limited contextual hints suggest He was a typical Middle Eastern man of His time.
   D. Scientific tests have confirmed a precise ethnic ancestry.
10. **Ultimately, what is the chapter's overall message when asking, "So, what does Jesus look like?"**
   A. Knowing His precise physical details is essential for worship.
   B. His appearance is the key to understanding His divinity.
   C. His identity, mission, and redemptive power far exceed the significance of His physical form.
   D. Accurate physical depictions are critical for preserving historical truth.

Answer Key

1. **C**
2. **C**

3. **B**
4. **B**
5. **C**
6. **C**
7. **B**
8. **B**
9. **C**
10. **C**

These questions invite deep reflection on the ways we conceptualize Jesus, not through a literal portrait, but through an understanding of His transformative teachings, sacrificial love, and enduring character.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John was born in 1952 in a small farming community in southern Wisconsin. His parents moved to western Massachusetts when he was six months old. He received his primary education and was raised in western Massachusetts with three siblings. John holds a Master of Fine Arts from Baptist Bible College and Seminary in Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania, majoring in ministry and theology. He has been married since 1980 to his wife Cynthia. They have two sons and five grandchildren. He has served Christ for over 30 years in various settings which range from pastoring to planting a home church. He has also led several in-home Bible classes along with his wife Cynthia.

John is a writer with a strong Christology and grace centered theology. He is also an accomplished musician and composer. He is a master of the classical and flamenco/Spanish guitar. He has performed before audiences from New England to Texas and recorded his guitar artistry. John and Cynthia have a music ministry which is called Son-Rise. They record and compose their original music under their independent label Lone Gull Productions.

John and Cynthia live in South Carolina. He occupies his spare time with running, cooking, fishing, cycling, and grandchildren. They continue to be deeply interested in the mission field, both local and abroad. John can be contacted at johnerbentraut1@gmail.com.

Or visit his website @ https://www.johnerbentraut.com/

John Wesley Erbentraut

Personal Notes

Personal Notes

John Wesley Erbentraut

Personal Notes

Personal Notes

John Wesley Erbentraut

Personal Notes

Personal Notes

John Wesley Erbentraut

Personal Notes

Personal Notes

John Wesley Erbentraut

Personal Notes

Personal Notes

John Wesley Erbentraut

Personal Notes

Personal Notes

John Wesley Erbentraut

Personal Notes

Personal Notes

John Wesley Erbentraut

Personal Notes

Personal Notes

John Wesley Erbentraut

Personal Notes

Personal Notes

John Wesley Erbentraut

Personal Notes

Personal Notes

John Wesley Erbentraut

Personal Notes

Personal Notes

John Wesley Erbentraut

Personal Notes